

THE BEACON

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2006



Nebraska Emergency Management Agency



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GRANTS, PLANNING, EXERCISING AND TRAINING HEAD LIST OF PRIORITIES AS WE ENTER 2007 PROGRAMS

This month finally gives us a respite from the wildfires and drought conditions that faced many a Nebraska community this past summer. With the slowing of the fire season and moving into the winter months our thoughts as emergency managers turn to winter preparedness and a time to reassess the health of our local programs.

At the state agency level we continue to work on a daily basis with the state emergency management and homeland security programs as we ready for the 2007 program. It seems like we have just barely gotten out the 2006 grants and already we are preparing for integration into the 07 program.

At this time we have information the initial grant guidance to the states will be released on the 17th of November. NEMA and members of the state planning team will be attending a technical assistance workshop this month to receive the initial guidance on the investment justification process.

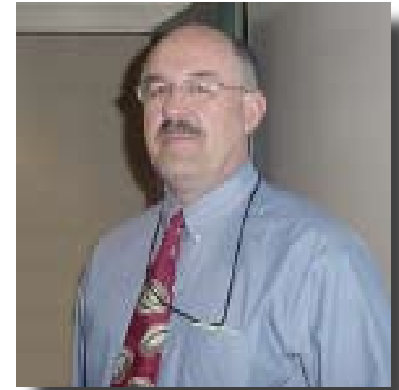
While little is known about the overall program, we do know that we will again have to submit investment justifications supporting the identified national priorities and target capabilities as well as integration of the state homeland security strategy into the National Response Plan.

Preliminary information also has the "state" writing a State level Tactical Interoperable Communications Plan-TICP.

As you know another priority for our state this year as well as in future years is the state Planning Exercising and Training Program. We are very near being able to kick off this program at the state/local level.

With the work being planned by our professional support and by targeting agency staff in support of the process, we are confident we will be able to very effectively make strategic decisions about our overall state program and direction.

We are confident the work being done with the PET process, TICP's completed and targeted to be completed will allow us to effectively utilize support coming into the state.



When we completed the after-action reports from the wildfires this summer one of the successes identified was the positive impact of past planning, exercising and training on the overall local/state response. In just six short weeks we were able to validate the response plans put into place among local, state and federal governments. In itself, this would have not been possible except for the exceptional support and dedication to these efforts at the local level. As always, we will continue to work at the local level to bring programs forward that are supportive and integrate into the local/state response efforts.

In the coming months I look forward to meeting with each of you as we initiate and carry out the PET program within the training regions and hold the Exercise Planning-Communications Workshop in January.

For those local programs participating in the EMPG process, I anticipate receiving the initial grant application towards the end of November and opening the application period sometime around the 1st of January.

Al Berndt

NEW NEBRASKA GRANT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM PROMISES TO STREAMLINE APPLICATION PROCESS

The Nebraska Emergency Management Agency has been seeking a solution to improve the existing strategy, evaluation and reporting functions necessary to support the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) grant award process.

Specifically we were seeking to reduce the time and labor necessary to support the development of the state level strategy, tracking of performance associated with state goals and objectives, and reporting required by DHS.

NEMA has contracted with K2Share, LLC, a DHS Information Technology (IT) service contractor who presently hosts and manages multiple DHS applications, has developed a State Preparedness Assessment and Reporting Service (SPARS) that provides state administering agencies with tools to support the DHS grant monitoring, evaluation, and reporting process.

SPARS is a web accessible service designed to assist in development of

state level strategy, evaluation, and reporting requirements associated with DHS grant awards.

Additionally, the enterprise level service will provide NEMA a controlled



Training courses were conducted across the state for the new grants administration program for Nebraska DHS grant funding. Classes were held in Lincoln, Norfolk, Kearney and Ogalalla.

tool that allows for distribution of the grant workload to the regions and jurisdictions while providing greater monitoring and reporting visibility at the jurisdiction, region, and state level. SPARS is web accessible enterprise-level service that will support our Agency through the following functions:

(continued on page 4)

On the cover...

Training took on a new dimension at the most recent State Emergency Response Team (SERT) meeting in Kearney. As the team trained, a real-world event developed, involving an unknown powder. Once the collection and analysis was completed, the powder was found to be a cyanide compound.

GRANT TOOL ENHANCES PROCESS

(continued from page 3)

- Automate and enhance the grant application process through a web based interface that allows the submittal, review, and approval of jurisdiction projects
- Incorporate state grant application rules to ensure compliance with federal approved purchasing guidelines and procedures
- Allow NEMA to monitor and audit jurisdictions to review equipment use, serial numbers, location, point of contact information, status, and other relevant information to aid in grant evaluation
- Automate tracking and progress reporting on state goals, objectives, and projects
- Track and report on the status and use of grant funds
- Aid NEMA in the preparation of ISIP

- and BSIR report information
- Support DHS grant monitoring and audits
- Administrator and user help desk support.

Four training sessions will be held in November to train staff from other State Agencies and local County jurisdictions on the use of the system. Any entity receiving Department of Homeland Security grant funds are required to use the Nebraska GMS.

This program will help at all levels to manage the grants, and assist with inventory, reporting, and auditing.

NEMAHA COUNTY EMA SPONSORS DHS WMD TRAINING

The Nemaha County Emergency Management Agency sponsored a U.S. Department of Homeland Security training course, "Weapons of Mass Destruction Awareness" which was completed Tuesday, November 14 in the Emergency Operations Center at the Nemaha County Wellness Center, 601 "J" Street in Auburn.

Attending this training was Sheriff Brent Lottman, Deputies Colin Caudill, Harold Silvey, Kris Baker, and James Parsons; 911 Dispatchers, Gail Kelsay, Linda Colgrove, Tara Erikson, Tricia Gardener, and Katy Billings; Coy Blair and Robert Cole from the Emergency

Management Agency.

The course objective is to improve the capability of law enforcement and emergency responders to recognize, prepare for, deter and respond to threats and incidents of domestic terrorism using chemical, biological, radioactive or explosive devices.

Otoe County Emergency Management Agency Director Greg Goebel was instructor for the training, which was funded by a Homeland Security Agency grant administered by the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency.



SCHOOL HOSTAGE SCENARIO TESTS RESPONSE IN REGION 11 EMA FULL-SCALE EXERCISE

Region 11 Emergency Management conducted a full scale disaster exercise October 7, 2007. The disaster type was a high school being terrorized by boys and was held at Battle Creek Senior High School. The summary of the exercise includes three armed boys driving up to the front door of the school and entering the school firing weapons and detonating a bomb. Approximately twenty students were injured and another twenty were held captive.

The exercise "players" were familiarized with the scenario through a video that showed the first law enforcement officer



Participants in the exercise were Region 11 Emergency Management, Hadar Fire and Rescue, Madison Fire and Rescue, Battle Creek Fire and Rescue, Norfolk Fire, Madison County Sheriff's Office, Battle Creek Police Department, Faith Regional Health Services, NEMA, Madison County CERT, Salvation Army, Madison/Stanton County Red Cross and local high school students.

Region 11 was reconfigured in January, 2005 incorporating the counties of Antelope, Madison and Pierce and the City of Norfolk. Following Homeland Security guidelines, Region 11 conducted this first comprehensive disaster exercise involving the new members. The overall goal of the exercise was to bring the new members together to work and respond together. It was the desire of the group to discover the problems with communication, response and exercise location through this exercise. Faythe Petersen is the Region 11 Emergency Management Coordinator and Shane Weidner its administrator. Dave Ferguson of the Elkhorn Logan Valley Public Health Department was the coordinator of the exercise and completed all Homeland Security requirements.



responding to the school and the preceding events. Four rescue units and LifeNet responded as did the Madison County Sheriff's Office, Nebraska State Patrol and Battle Creek Police Department.

Approximately 30 students from Pierce, Battle Creek, Norfolk and Madison acted as the "victims" and did a wonderful job impersonating injured students. The students reported that the exercise was very lifelike and an experience they wouldn't want to go through in real life.

NEBRASKA CITY IS SITE OF RAD/WMD REGIONAL TRAINING

CITY HOSTS COUNTER-TERRORISM EXERCISE

Nebraska City hosted regional counter-terrorism training last week that focused on radiological awareness and weapons of mass destruction.

The four-day instructional course offered participants insight into identifying the types of radiation and minimizing exposure. It concluded Thursday with a training scenario where a terrorist cell with radiological explosive had seized control of city hall.

Jaman Ervin, a 27-year-old from Offutt Air Force Base, was a team leader in the exercise. The terrorists had been killed in an exchange of gunfire and Ervin's team was suited up to go into basement to locate any radiological hazards.

Placing cones to mark a variety of contaminated locations, the team recorded the level of radiation and sources and used updated information to help decide how long the group could stay in the contaminated area.

Steve Cody and Greg Cohn of Otoe County Emergency Management said that learning the dose amounts and time limits for radiological exposure was one of the toughest challenges of the course. Cohn said information on "dirty bombs" and explosion scenarios caught his attention.

"It opens your eyes to how vulnerable Otoe County really is," he said.

Gregg Goebel, Emergency Management Director, invited National Security Technologies, a Las Vegas, Nevada company to bring the course on weapons of mass destruction and counter terrorism opera-

tions to Nebraska City.

He said the class was open to people from within 500 miles and included members of St. Mary's Hospital and Southeast Health District, as well as first responders and active duty military.

"These are high caliber students," said Chat Sloane, one of six course instructors.

"This is a small jurisdiction, but a high-ability jurisdiction because of their attitude," he said.

The training teams were able to locate radiological hazards in the building, as well as describe the location of bodies and firearms. They exited the contaminated areas within acceptable time limits.

"They followed procedure. Here, we teach procedure, not operations," Sloane said of the class.

He said there was no-one to be rescued in the training exercise, but the team provided information and interior diagrams that would have been essential to a successful rescue mission.

Rick Foley, course director of the mobile training team, said the company teaches about 2,500 students each year. The company is based at the former radiological test site in Nevada.

Bryan Cook, state liaison with the state office for emergency management, also participated in the training course. He credited the instructors for professionalism.

"There's about 100 years of experience. They know what they are talking about," he said.

IS NEBRASKA NIMS COMPLIANT?



We've all seen the headlines: "NIMS is coming", "NIMS is out", "NIMS, NIMS, NIMS". The question remains, is Nebraska NIMS compliant? Before we answer that question, let's look toward our 93 counties, our thousands of first responders and our overwhelming number of volunteer responders. Have you taken the ICS courses on-line or were you lucky enough to sit through a class?

September 15th was the deadline for submission of the NIMS requirements from each of the 93 counties. The counties were asked to submit a letter of NIMS compliance on behalf of their cities/villages and to complete the on-line NIMCAST. To date, we have received all but three counties' NIMSCAST results and almost all the counties' letters. If you are one of the counties that haven't completed those requirements, then we would ask, are YOU NIMS compliant?

October 20th was the deadline for Nebraska to submit a self-certification letter to the Department of Homeland Security attesting Nebraska's NIMS compliance. Similar to the letters the counties submitted, Nebraska had to certify that we've met 23 criteria, ranging from ICS training, communication/information management to resource management. If you are interested in the complete list, please contact Tonya Ngotel at (402) 471-7176.

In November we will receive the FY '07 NIMS compliance tools. No longer will states be allowed to "self certify" their NIMS compliance. Is Nebraska NIMS compliant? As of September 25th, when we faxed our self certification letter to DHS, we are NIMS compliant. We couldn't have done it without the 93 counties, the thousands of first responders and all the wonderful volunteers.

HALLAM BREAKS GROUND FOR NEW VILLAGE AUDITORIUM

One more piece of evidence that Hallam, Nebraska has come back fell into place November first when ground was broken for the town's new auditorium.

Hallam was nearly blown off the landscape on May 22, 2004 when a night of tornadoes devastated the southeast Nebraska countryside.

New homes, businesses and churches have sprung up in the town southwest of Lincoln, and the new auditorium construction will add one more new piece to the



EXECUTIVE TABLETOP EXERCISE KICKS OFF TERREX '07

A global pandemic influenza outbreak represents one of the most potentially catastrophic threats to the U.S. public health system. In the 20th Century, three major pandemics were caused by the emergence of several new influenza A virus subtypes that resulted in more than 600,000 deaths in the United States.

Representatives from Nebraska state agencies came together on October 26 to begin the process of planning for the possibility of another such outbreak. In an executive-level tabletop exercise at



the Cornhusker Hotel, a facilitator led the group through a pan-flu scenario designed to test the relationships among executive-level state government partners. In preparing for such a threat, public health agencies must work closely with many entities on all jurisdictional levels.

The exercise relied on a “forced-decision-making” framework, which requires participants to make key decisions at each of many discussion points after considering the scenario and information provided to them.

The exercise focused on five broad issue areas: Surveillance and Epidemiology; Command, Control, and Communications; Risk Communication; and Resource Coordination.

The exercise consisted of three sections: Unfolding Situation – Decisions and Responses; Later Development – Decisions and Responses; and Debriefing and Self-Evaluation. Participants were encouraged to develop short- and long-term plans for all gaps identified in the evaluation process.



RESPONDERS BEWARE: TRANSCAER IS COMING TO A TOWN NEAR YOU!

The State Emergency Response Commission (SERC) with support from, the NAEM, NHMA, NDEQ, USDOT, EPA, UP, BNSF and others, will sponsor TRANSCAER (Transportation Community Awareness and Emergency Response) training in 2007.

TRANSCAER is a voluntary national outreach effort which assists communities that have major transportation routes within their jurisdiction and addresses potential community concerns about the

transportation of hazards materials.

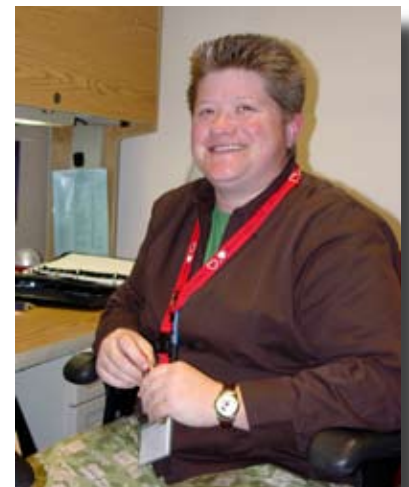
The TRANSCAER planning committee has identified several potential stops throughout Nebraska to include McCook, Columbus and Lincoln. For more information on TRANSCAER check their web site at: <http://www.transcaer.org>, or the SERC web site at <http://www.nema.ne.gov>.

TWO NEW EXERCISE TRAINING OFFICERS JOIN NEMA



Abby DeBuse comes to NEMA from the Nebraska Division of Communications, where she spent a year and a half working with communication grants and MOU regions. That experience, combined with a degree in Criminal Justice from the University of Nebraska/Lincoln and a Master's in Criminal Justice and Public Administration from the University of Nebraska/Omaha promises great support for Nebraska emergency management. Abby is a Lincoln, Nebraska native, and is a confessed sports fan, particularly sand volleyball and softball. She's excited about the opportunities the ETO position provides her to travel and participate in emergency management at the local level.

Misty Ellis has looped back in state government, returning to the Military Department after eight and a half years in the Nebraska Department of Corrections. She spent three and a half years with the Nebraska Military Department before moving to Corrections. As a Lieutenant at Corrections, she served as an Emergency Preparedness Specialist, and she looks to the ETO position at NEMA as an opportunity to further her emergency management education and to take her skills and knowledge out to the local jurisdictions. Originally from Dallas, Texas, Misty says she is a "huge Cowboys fan".



PLATTE COUNTY JOINT VENTURE PROVIDES PUBLIC WITH BLUEPRINT FOR DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

In previous years, Platte County has held a "preparedness day" that involved a number of response and preparedness agencies. They always have enjoyed a good response from the public, but the event is a lot of work to organize.

This year, the county decided to scale it down a bit, so they contacted their local Hy-Vee store to arrange a preparedness display on one of the store's busy "One Day Sale" days.

The store agreed, and Hy-Vee donated the use of all the groceries and supplies. Ace Hardware donated the use of tools and flashlights for the display, and Columbus Community Hospital donated preparedness brochures that they produced illustrating a 20-week preparedness program. (Example of front page below.)

The program allows for the assembly of a disaster kit over a 20 week period, spreading the cost of the supplies and assembly time over that period.

The cost of the additional supplies per week for one adult and child is approximately \$16 to \$20.



Members of the Prairie Valley Chapter of the Red Cross helped put the display together, and members from Platte County Emergency Management, East Central District Health Department and the Columbus Area United Way help staff and organize the display.

Volunteers from Platte County's volunteer recruitment program helped staff the display and hand out brochures.

WEEK 11

GROCERY STORE:

- ☐ 1 large can juice*
- ☐ 1 box quick energy snacks
- ☐ 3 rolls paper towels
- ☐ Medicine dropper

TO DO:

- ☐ Test your smoke detector(s). Replace the battery in each detector that does not work. Replace any detector over 10 years old.

WEEK 12

ANIMAL CARE STORE:

- ☐ Extra harness, leash, ID tags, and food for your pets
- ☐ Litter/pan
- ☐ Extra water

VETERINARIAN:

- ☐ Obtain current vaccinations and medical records of your animal(s)
- ☐ Medications

TO DO:

- ☐ Develop a pet care plan in case of disaster.
- ☐ Make photocopies of all vaccination records and put them in your disaster supplies kit.
- ☐ Put extra animal harness, leash, and identification tags in your disaster supplies kit.

WEEK 13

HARDWARE STORE:

- ☐ Perforated metal tape (sometimes called plumber's tape or strap iron)
- ☐ Whistle
- ☐ Plans
- ☐ Screwdriver
- ☐ Hammer

TO DO:

- ☐ Take a first aid/CPR class.
- ☐ Strap your water heater to wall studs using perforated metal tape.

WEEK 14

HARDWARE STORE:

- ☐ 1 can fruit*
- ☐ 1 can meat*
- ☐ 1 can vegetables*
- ☐ 1 package eating utensils
- ☐ 1 package paper cups

TO DO:

- ☐ Discuss with your network and neighbors what help you may need in an emergency and how best to assist them.
- ☐ Practice using alternate methods of evacuation with your network.

WEEK 15

GROCERY STORE:

- ☐ Extra flashlight
- ☐ Wood screws
- ☐ Labels for your equipment and supplies
- ☐ Extra battery for portable radio
- ☐ Assorted nails

TO DO:

- ☐ Make arrangements to bolt bookcases and cabinets to wall studs.
- ☐ Label equipment and attach instruction cards.

WEEK 16

GROCERY STORE:

- ☐ 1 can meat*
- ☐ 1 can vegetables*
- ☐ 1 box quick energy snacks
- ☐ 1 box facial tissue
- ☐ Dried fruit/nuts

TO DO:

- ☐ Develop a disaster supplies kit for your car or van.

WEEK 17

GROCERY STORE:

- ☐ 1 box graham crackers
- ☐ Dry cereal
- ☐ Plastic containers with lids

FIRST AID SUPPLIES:

- ☐ Antidiarrheal medicine
- ☐ Rubbing alcohol
- ☐ Antiseptic
- ☐ Syrup of ipecac and activated charcoal

TO DO:

- ☐ Arrange for a friend or neighbor to help your children if you are not able to respond or are at work.

WEEK 18

HARDWARE STORE:

- ☐ "Child proof" latches or other fasteners for your cupboards
- ☐ Plastic bucket with tight lid
- ☐ Double-sided tape or Velcro® to secure moveable objects
- ☐ Plastic sheeting

TO DO:

- ☐ Install latches on cupboards and secure moveable objects.
- ☐ Put away a blanket or sleeping bag for each household member.

WEEK 19

GROCERY STORE:

- ☐ 1 box quick-energy snacks
- ☐ Plastic wrap
- ☐ Aluminum foil
- ☐ Comfort foods (such as cookies, candy bars)

Also procure care items, if needed.

TO DO:

- ☐ Review your insurance coverage with your agent to be sure you are covered for the disasters that may occur in your area. Obtain additional coverage, as needed.
- ☐ Purchase and have installed an emergency escape ladder for upper story windows, if needed.

WEEK 20

HARDWARE STORE:

- ☐ Camping or utility knife
- ☐ Work gloves
- ☐ Safety goggles
- ☐ Disposable dust masks
- ☐ 2 blank videocassettes

SPECIALTY STORE:

- ☐ Get an extra battery for motorized mobility aids

TO DO:

- ☐ Use a video camera to tape the contents of your home for insurance purposes.
- ☐ Make a copy of the videotape and send to an out-of-town friend or family member.
- ☐ Find out about your workplace disaster plan.

* Purchase one for each member of the household.

Disaster Preparedness 5 Month Calendar supplied by Devon-Hill Safety Management Company © 2004. For more information about disaster preparedness, contact your local Red Cross chapter or Outreach Services of Columbus Community Hospital at 402-562-4499.

Columbus Community Hospital

Disaster Preparedness

PREPARATION GUIDE FOR EMERGENCIES

COLUMBUS COMMUNITY HOSPITAL
OUTREACH SERVICES
402-562-4499

RADIATION CALIBRATION CLASS SERVES THREE STATES

The Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) hosted a two-day training seminar by Ludlum Measurements, a manufacturer of radiation monitoring devices.

Ludlum representative Randy Smith worked with NEMA Radiological Systems Manager Mike Loftis and calibration specialists from the University of Nebraska/Lincoln, The University of Nebraska Medical Center and Missouri and Iowa emergency management agencies.

The session provided attendees with a general look at radiation monitoring



equipment and different types of probes, along with the chance to explore monitoring methods and tips.

LOFTIS NAMED EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR RUNNER-UP



Mike Loftis, Radiological Systems Manager for the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) was named the 2006 Employee of the Year Runner-up for the Nebraska Military Department.

Loftis, who has been with the agency since January of 2005, received the award and a cash honorarium in ceremonies at the Adjutant General's Headquarters Building in Lincoln on October 24.

Pictured at left is Mike Loftis (right) with Jon Schwarz, NEMA's Radiological Emergency Preparedness Division Supervisor.

NATIONAL PUBLIC EDUCATION CAMPAIGN SET TO RAISE AWARENESS OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

On November 30, 2006, the National Emergency Management Association (NEMA), Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM) will hold a joint press conference at the National Press Club in Washington, DC. FEMA Director Dave Paulison will join NEMA President Albert Ashwood and IAEM President Mike Selves to discuss the status of emergency management today and where it is headed in the future. DHS Under Secretary for Preparedness George Foresman has been invited to participate as well. They will discuss the importance of all-hazards emergency management and building capabilities from the bottom up. This will also be an opportunity to welcome the New Congress and pledge commitment to working with them to continue to enhance national preparedness.

A National Public Education Campaign was initiated by the NEMA Board of Directors in 2006. The development and delivery of a National Public Education Campaign is an objective in the NEMA FY06 and FY07 Strategic Plans. The fundamental purpose of the campaign is to create a better understanding by the general public and elected officials of what emergency management is and what it does on a daily basis, and why they should support strong emergency management programs in their communities and states.

The implementation timeline for the national campaign has been sidetracked a little by other time sensitive issues for NEMA – i.e. the lengthy EMAC response to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita and the subsequent 10-month after-action review, working with Congress on the DHS appropriations and FEMA reform bill, etc. Now NEMA is ready to fully implement the campaign.

One of the first tasks of the campaign was to design a standardized symbol for emergency management that could be

used at all levels of government and could be instantly recognizable by the general public. The EM symbol was approved by the NEMA Board of Directors last May and has since been provided to all state directors, with a request that it be integrated with educational and promotional materials as appropriate. The logo is not intended to replace existing logos, but to compliment them. The second component of the campaign was to develop an EM web site where the general public could go for information about the profession, learn its history and current issues, and find information about jobs in emergency management and volunteerism. The EM web site was rolled out with the EM logo and is accessible at <http://www.emweb.org>. NEMA asked all states to provide a link to this site from their own agency web sites. The EM site is maintained by NEMA. IAEM has also distributed the logo and link to the web site to their membership and is encouraging their use.

In coordination with the press conference at the National Press Club, NEMA has arranged for a satellite uplink for radio and television stations in major media markets and disaster-prone areas.

Immediately following the press conference there will be a series of radio and newspaper interviews that will carry the same message, but be more in depth. NEMA has contracted with Morrie Goodman and AGG International to implement the campaign. Morrie is the former FEMA Public Affairs Director under James Lee Witt, and is in the process of drafting the national media advisory regarding the press conference and the talking points. He is also putting together a digital press kit that will include a press release, articles on current issues, camera-ready artwork of the EM logo and more. The digital press kit will be shared with all states as soon as it is final.



This is a listing of N.E.M.A.-sponsored training activities. To download a brochure or to register for a course, please visit the N.E.M.A. website at <http://www.nema.ne.gov> and click the button titled "Register for a Training Class".

Training Calendar Year 2006 - 2007

COURSE & REGISTRATION	DATE	LOCATION	COURSE MANAGER
State Exercise Planning & Training Workshop	January 30-31 2007	Holiday Inn Express North Platte, NE	Tami Freeman tami.freeman@nema.ne.gov
Basic Academy 2007	March 18-23, 2007	Holiday Inn Express North Platte, NE	Tami Freeman tami.freeman@nema.ne.gov
Advanced Training Opportunities	March 19-23 2006	Holiday Inn Express North Platte, NE	Nikki Weber nikki.weber@nema.ne.gov